



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

State Superintendent's Council on Special Education

2008-2009 Annual Report
State Superintendent's Council on Special education
April 2009

Mandated under Chapter 15.377(4), Wisconsin Statutes and 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(21), the Wisconsin State Superintendent's Council on Special Education provides advisory input to the State Superintendent on matters related to 1) statewide delivery of special education programming and related services and 2) the degree to which such services are applied to any rules and regulations proposed by the State as well as state policies and initiatives that affect students with disabilities and their advocates.

Appointed by the State Superintendent, Council members represent a wide range of interested citizens, professionals and educators from throughout the state. Council membership consists of parents, teachers and administrators of programs for students with disabilities and others concerned about the education of students with disabilities. Council meetings were held on September 10, 2008; November 17, 2008; February 20, 2009; and April 30, 2009. The meetings are open to the public. Anyone wishing to address the council may do so. Listening sessions were held in conjunction with the November and April meetings.

The 2008-2009 Council worked to gain a better understanding of several issues affecting special education throughout the state. Key issues included: Disproportionality in Special Education, State Performance Target Goals Indicators, progress on the 20 Standards, Resolution Meetings, teacher licensing, transition requirements at age 14, and updates on multiple other issues detailed below.

Thirty-four IDEA complaint decisions were shared with council members. One due process hearing decision was shared.

Stakeholder Reports were presented related to the following issues:

- Resolution Meetings: State Supports and Practices (A study conducted and published by Project Forum and CADRE staff)
- Wisconsin State Legislature's Special Committee on School Safety activities and accomplishments
- School is Not Supposed to Hurt: Investigative Report on Abusive Restraint and Seclusion in Schools
- Higher Education Opportunity Act (H.R. 4137) which increases the access of homeless and foster care students to postsecondary education

The Council heard presentations from DPI staff on and discussed when appropriate the following topics/issues:

- Update on the activities of the Stakeholders Group
- The Open Doors to Employment handbook
- Self assessment compliance results (Information Update Bulletin) from SY 2006-2007 and 2007-2008
- A letter addressing report card and transcript issues related to students with disabilities

- Issues related to the State Performance Plan revolving around Coordinated Early Intervention Services (CEIS) and the centralized data collection system
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Final Regulations
- Updates on the Culturally Responsive Education for All: Training and Enhancement (CREATE) and Wisconsin Assistive technology Initiative (WATI) grants
- The third Annual Performance report submitted to the USDE, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
- An update on IDEA Discretionary Grants
- Information related to the IDEA flow through Stimulus Package dollars
- Special Education Eligibility Criteria and Evaluation for Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- The ten year history of the prevalence of special education
- An update on the applicability of recent changes in Special Education Law to Open Enrollment applications
- Information about DPI plans to reestablish a workgroup to develop Wisconsin Eligibility Criteria for Specific Learning Disabilities
- The role of the DPI and Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators (WASDA) in providing leadership for the March, 2009 Response to Intervention (RtI) Summit

The council discussed the possibility of meeting quarterly due to budget concerns.

The council approved the following motions:

- Approved the 2007-2008 Annual Report at the November meeting
- Recommended that the State Superintendent request a review of the Annual Performance Report related to the 20 Indicators so that the information would be reported in a timely manner and that in cases of non-compliance sanctions would be only applied to the entity/agency in non-compliance
- Recommended that Wisconsin seek the exemption of 4-year rate (for 5+ years)
- Requested that personnel communications be sent to all persons signing in at the November Public Forum to communicate our appreciation for stating their suggestions/ concerns/commendations to the Council and Department
- Approved a new Council calendar

The Council had a very productive year. Discussion and sharing among Council members, input at the public listening session and reports from Department and outside presenters strengthened the recommendations of the Council and increased the understanding of all members of the Council and the constituencies that they represent.

On behalf of the State Superintendent's Council on Special Education, I wish to express our appreciation to Dr. Stephanie Petska and Courtney Reed Jenkins for their diligent work on behalf of the special education community and Council, the other members of the Department who took their time to present information and share their expertise with the Council, and the State Superintendent for the opportunity to serve.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Hart

Holly Hart, Ph.D., Vice Chairperson
State Superintendent's Council on Special Education